

Central Indiana

February 2019

Climate Summary

35th Warmest on record at Indianapolis

12th Wettest on record at Indianapolis

Tied for 60th Least Snowiest on record at Indianapolis

Temperatures

The month of February started out cold as central Indiana continued to thaw from the bitterly temperatures experienced at the end of January. The transition however was rapid as high temperatures surged into the 50s and 60s by the 3rd and 4th. Most locations experienced their warmest temperatures for the month on the afternoon of the 3rd with high temperatures in the lower 60s. An additional but short surge of warmth occurred on the 6th and 7th ahead of a strong cold front with much of the area again warming into the upper 50s and lower 60s in the late morning and early afternoon of the 7th ahead of the front.

Much of central Indiana experienced a 40-50° transition from midday on the 7th to the morning of the 8th as much colder air again returned with temperatures falling into the teens. This began a stretch of largely below normal temperatures that would last through the 12th and 13th with highs first in the 20s before moderating into the 30s. Valentine's Day and the 15th would again see a short but noticeable period of warmer temperatures with highs peaking in the 50s, before temperatures returned to colder than normal conditions for several days with highs in the 30s and lows in the 20s.

The last week of February saw temperatures return to near to above normal levels as colder Arctic air remained bottled up to the north and milder air from the Pacific overspread the region. Highs were largely in the 40s throughout the last several days of

the month, with two days where highs rose to near 60° on the 23rd and early on the 24th ahead of a strong cold front.

Site	February 2019 Avg Temp	February 2019 Difference from Normal	Highest Temperature	Lowest Temperature
Indianapolis	33.8	+1.7	62 on 3	10 on 9
Lafayette	30.5	0.0	57 on 7	7 on 9
Muncie	33.6	+3.9	61 on 7	9 on 1
Terre Haute	34.3	+1.9	62 on 3	10 on 9
Bloomington (*)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shelbyville	34.7	+3.0	61 on 3	13 on 2 and 9
Indy – Eagle Crk.	33.5	+1.5	62 on 3	11 on 9

(*) Bloomington temperature data largely unavailable for February.

At Indianapolis, there were 16 days with above normal average temperatures and 12 days with below normal average temperatures.

February 2019 was the 35th warmest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Precipitation

Overall, February ended up being an above average month when it comes to precipitation and flooding. The central and southern portions of the state ended the month with 150 to more than 200% of normal precipitation. The northern portions of the state ended up 100 to 125 % of normal with some areas of less than normal in west central Indiana. Precipitation ranged from 1.5 to 3 inches across north central Indiana to over 6 inches in portions of southern Indiana. Indianapolis ended with 4.68 inches of rain which puts it as the 12th wettest February of all time.

A heavy rain event occurred over 48 hours from the 6th to the 8th. Rainfall amounts ranged from less than an inch across the Upper Wabash Basin, to 2-3 inches along much of the Wabash and Upper White basins, to 4 to 5 inches across the lower White and East Fork White basins. Across Monroe County, spotters reported storm totals between 4 and 5.8 inches. There were reports of significant flash flooding causing road closures and washouts in Knox, Johnson, Brown, and Monroe counties. The city of Bloomington saw some of the worst flash flooding with this event.

Another rain event occurred from the 10th to the 12th brought around an inch of rain to

much of the state which caused brief minor flooding in areas that flooding had ended, and prolonged flooding in areas still in flood.

Flooding returned to the Wabash River basin on the 25th as a result of a rain event across central Indiana that brought less than an inch of rain to portions of the state. With saturated soils and river levels still high, brief minor flooding occurred along portions of the Upper Wabash and raised river levels at points downstream.

Site	February 2019 Precipitation	February 2019 Difference from Normal	Wettest Day	Longest Dry Stretch
Indianapolis	4.68	+2.36	1.45 on 7	3 days 14-16 and 25-27
Lafayette	1.62	-0.14	0.42 on 12	3 days 14-16 and 25-27
Muncie	3.36	+1.05	1.02 on 7	3 days 14-16 and 25-27
Terre Haute	3.94	+2.01	1.41 on 7	4 days 25-28
Bloomington (*)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shelbyville	5.80	+3.44	2.06 on 7	3 days 14-16 and 25-27
Indy – Eagle Crk.	4.15	+2.02	1.24 on 7	3 days 14-16 and 25-27

(*) Bloomington precipitation data largely unavailable for February.

February 2019 was the 12th wettest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Snowfall

Snowfall amounts ranged from around 10 inches across the northeast to around an inch in the southern portions of the area throughout February. Across central Indiana, most of the snowfall that occurred during the month was confined to quick hitting systems that produced 1 to 3 inches, especially on the 10th and 20th. Arguably, the most impactful snowfall of February occurred right at the very beginning of the month, as a storm that began on January 31 continued to produce snow into the 1st. Much of the heaviest snow fell along and north of Interstate 74 with locations receiving 2 to 5 inches. Some areas across northeast portions of central Indiana from near Anderson northeast towards Muncie and Winchester received in excess of 5 inches of snowfall.

Severe Weather

An intense storm system brought the first severe weather threat of 2019 to central Indiana on the early afternoon of the 7th. Damaging winds impacted southern portions of central Indiana as a line of fast moving storms tracked east. A tornado produced EF-0 damage on a roughly three mile path across southwest Knox County as well.

Scattered thunderstorms developed ahead of a strong cold front on the evening of the 23rd and early morning of the 24th. While storms did not produce any severe weather, a prolonged period of strong wind gusts followed the passage of the front and impacted the entire region all day on the 24th. Wind gusts north of Interstate 70 peaked at 60-65 mph and produced wind damage and power outages. At Indianapolis, the 66 mph peak gust was the highest non-thunderstorm gust measured at the airport since April 6, 1988. For more information about this event, please click on this link <https://www.weather.gov/ind/feb242019winds>.

For information on severe weather in other areas during February, visit the Storm Prediction Center "Severe Weather Event Summaries" website at <http://www.spc.noaa.gov/climo/online/>.

Miscellaneous

The maximum wind gust at the Indianapolis International Airport was 66 mph from the west during the morning of the 24th in the wake of a very strong cold front. Fog or haze was reported at Indianapolis on 19 days during the month including 4 days with dense fog. Thunder occurred on 2 days during the month with freezing rain or drizzle also occurring on 2 days in February.

March 2019 Outlook

The official outlook for March 2019 from the Climate Prediction Center indicates a greater chance for below normal temperatures and an equal chance for near, above or below normal precipitation across central Indiana. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the month is 42.2 degrees. The average precipitation for March at Indianapolis is 3.56", with 2.6" of snowfall.

Spring 2019 Outlook

The official outlook for meteorological spring (March-May 2019) from the Climate Prediction Center indicates an equal chance, of near, above or below normal temperatures and precipitation. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the spring season is 52.6 degrees. The average spring season precipitation is 12.42 inches along with 2.8 inches of snowfall, most of which typically falls during the month of March.

Data prepared by the Indianapolis Forecast Office.